

Wm. Cameron
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EVIDENCES

OF THE GLORIES OF THE ONE

DIVINE INTELLIGENCE,

AS SEEN IN

HIS WORKS.

BY

REV. THOMAS HURLBURT,

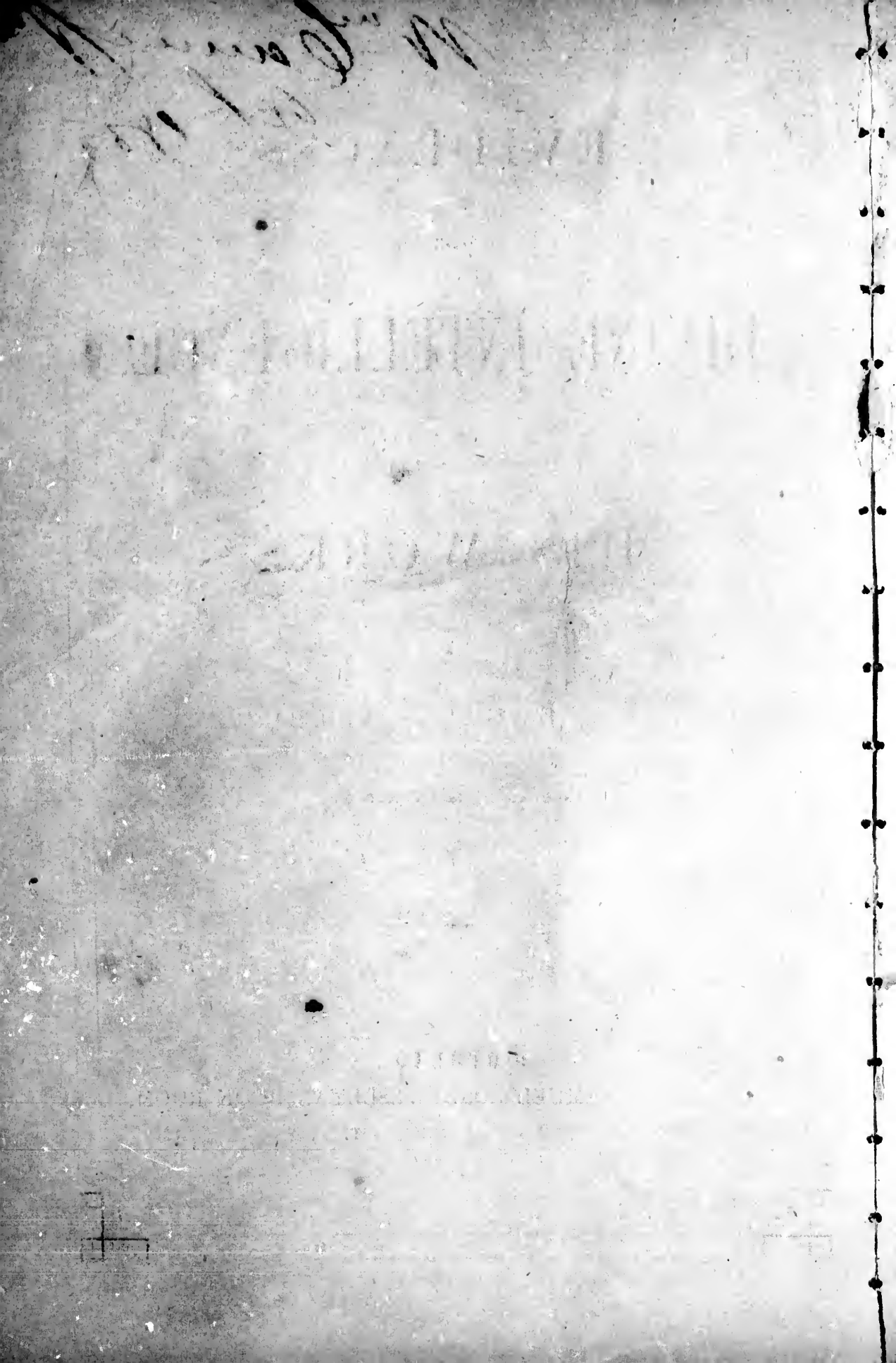
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P R E F A C E .

One of our junior Ministers having applied to me for some works to aid him in meeting infidel cavils, suggested the idea of gathering the following facts and reflections, which I have derived from various sources, and have put them in the form of an Essay, thinking, perhaps, they might be of some general use.

THOMAS HURLBURT.

UNITY AND GLORY OF GOD, AS SEEN IN HIS WORKS.

"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are *clearly* seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead: so that they are without excuse." Rom. i. 20.

We need not inquire whether Paul and the other inspired writers comprehended the full import of the message the Spirit intended to convey to the world through them. In time the church will find use for all these teachings, and the ministers of the word will be compelled to study these "things that are made," in all their length and breadth.

That God has had a plan in redemption, formed before the foundation of the world, we know; for we read of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. We also read that Christ was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for us. This we could not know but by revelation. But that he has such a plan in creation, we may learn from His works—a plan introduced in the earliest dawn of time, and rigidly adhered to through all ages. It was not necessary that revelation should teach us this, for we have it before us in creation. Those who demand revelation should teach us those things that lie within the domain of nature, seem to forget that it is not consistent with the character of God to reveal the same things twice over, or to mingle in the same inspired message the eternal realities of the Spirit with the things of a day. There are the best of reasons why God in revealing the supernatural should not mingle lower things with it, as the whole design of revelation is a restoration of man's spiritual nature, which lies above and beyond the domain of nature so called.

UNITY OF THE GODHEAD SEEN IN THE UNITY OF CREATION.

The task is imposed on science, in the interest of christianity, to reveal the evidences of the unity, wisdom, power, and goodness of God, as seen in his works; these, when read aright, reveal an ever present, ever working, divine, personal, intelligence. God is light, and light the first-born of things after the creation of the material worlds, shows this substance to be the same in all worlds, and for all time. The faintest ray forming a spectrum in Lord Ross' six foot reflector after its weary journey, it may be, of twenty millions of years, shows the same prismatic colors as the light of to-day from our own sun. These messengers from the remotest visible world islands in the depths of space, though journeying so long and so far, have maintained their identity, though every moment crossing at all angles an infinite number of other rays, and every moment lessening by diverging rays given off, still they were never absorbed, diverted, or deflected from their course. The God of the Bible alone can work like this.

Another universal law is found in the attraction of gravitation. This binds all worlds, however remote, in such bonds and harmonies as plainly bespeak the existence of one supreme personal intelligence.

The forms, rotations, and revolutions of the mighty orbs of the sky, proclaim the one living and true God. Those erratic bodies, the aerolites that come to us from the depths of planetary space, after untold ages of solitary wanderings, show us no new substance, only differently compounded from those of earth.

If we come down from the general laws of the universe to the materials of our own globe, we find equally all-pervading laws; the different elementary substances combining, only in definite proportions. This law obtains as well in the lowest accessible rocky strata, as in the waters of the ocean, and all other liquids, all gaseous substances, and the aerial envelope

of the globe. We never obtain a view, however obscure or remote, of any created things, not under the control of these all pervading laws, which most distinctly point to the divine intelligence as their author.

The records of geology again bring us, as it were, face to face with the Deity; and while opening to us the methods through which the forces of nature have accomplished His purposes—while proving that there has been a plan, glorious in its scheme, and perfect in system, progressing through unmeasured ages, and looking ever towards Man, and a spiritual end, it leads us to no other solution of the great problem of creation, whether of kinds, of matter, or of species of life than this—*God has done it.*

MAN APPEARS AT THE PROPER TIME AND PLACE.

Asia has always been the continent of physical progress, and soon far outstripped the other continents in the orders and variety of organic life, especially America and Australia. There seems to have been a hastening onward and upward in this part of the world to prepare a habitation for man. Animal life was of a higher type, and in much greater variety. Thus, the Oriental continent had successively passed through the Australian and American stages, and leaving the other continents behind, it stood in the forefront of progress. It is, therefore, in accordance with all past analogies that man should have originated on some part of the great Orient, and no spot would seem to have been better for man's self-distribution and self-development than south-western Asia, the centre from which the three grand continental divisions of Europe, Asia, and Africa radiate.

It is in this region Scripture locates the garden of Eden, and God's finished work in the creation of man. Thus geology, reason, and Scripture unite on this region. Both geology and Scripture again unite in saying that since man's creation no evi-

dence exists of a single new creation, either vegetable or animal. It is in south-western Asia that the best developed specimens of mankind are found. It is from this region men have radiated to different parts of the world. Go in what direction we may from this central region, we find in all the aboriginal races a marked degradation, that goes on increasing the farther we get from this cradle of the human race, until, having arrived at the extreme southern limits of the continents, the human form divine assumes the extreme of ugliness and degradation compatible with self-perpetuation. The investigations of Darwin on the variations of species, and other facts of like character, set aside objections to an origin from one stock, arising from diversities of the races. How came Moses such long ages in advance of the deductions of science and the facts of history, but by being inspired by God?

A PLAN LAID DOWN AT THE BEGINNING.

In our investigations into the manifestations of organic life, we find not only a beginning or genesis plainly revealed, but a precise plan adopted, in accordance to which all organic life must rigidly conform. This plan has been persistently adhered to in all ages, and has again re-appeared in the organisms that have re-peopled the globe after every revolution, when animal life having many times become nearly or quite extinct, to be replaced by others, generally of higher types.

For a long time scientific men, in their classifications, supposed the systems they propounded were their own, not imagining that God had a plan, or systematic order in creation. At length it dawned on some minds to inquire if there were any evidences of a systematic order or plan in creation, and to their surprise they found there was such a plan, perfect, and all comprehensive. The only difficulty had been that they had not been able heretofore to read this hand-writing of Divinity. Cuvier was the first to show that all animal

forms were built on four different plans--the Radiata the Mollusk, the Articulate, and the Vertebrate. These all started simultaneously in time, and have existed side by side ever since. Each one of these four plans has been multiplied, and modified many ten thousand times; and although the multiplied species, orders, and genera, many times over, became nearly or quite all extinct, and have as often been again replaced by other, and on the whole higher forms by direct creative power, still no sign of a fifth class or plan has anywhere been found, nor has one ever been wanting. Such persistency, with such flexibility of plan, can only be from the resources of Deity.

When God created the first Radiate animal, it was a mute but prophetic assurance that he designed to create all the variety of animal life, included potentially in this pattern. The many ten thousand species, orders, and genera of this class would seem to have exhausted all the possible variations of this plan, and to have fulfilled the prophecy. Within the range assigned to this class, both as to form and instinct, or endowments, the whole space is filled up; but in order to make for himself a field sufficiently ample for this purpose, he enlarged the domain of creation in the microscopic world of organisms, to complete the whole within the appointed limits of time and space.

The same representations will hold in regard to the Mollusks and Articulates. But in regard to the Vertebrate, there is a higher significance. The first form of this class that appeared in the twilight of time, was a mute, but most important prophecy that God would create all the animals that could be made by variation of this plan of structure. In the three lower classes, bulk was of no special importance, but not so here. There are no microscopic vertebrates. All the possible variations culminated in man, and science declares that any modification or change of this highest species of the highest

class would imply degradation. Creation ceased with man. There is not the slightest hint in nature that any new species, vegetable or animal, have had their origin since God beheld his finished work, and, "Behold it was all very good." What an evidence have we here again of the divinity of the Bible.

NO DARWINIAN DEVELOPMENT IN CREATION.

Is there any evidence of a development from the lower to the higher forms of life? If we mean by this that God commenced creation in the lower forms in the main, and as ages rolled on, gradually introduced higher and still higher forms, we say, "Yes;" but if it is meant that there is a genetic connection between the lower and higher forms, we say, "No." The specimens preserved in the catacombs of Egypt, from the earliest dawn of civilization, show not the slightest difference from the living species in the same region. There is no evidence that animals in a wild state ever undergo any but the slightest changes in conformity with the circumstances of food and climate, and none of the modifications in domesticated animals are self-perpetuating, but revert back to the original type as soon as the hand of man is taken off. This theory, then, gains no sanction from anything that has transpired within the period of authentic history, but claims almost inter-minal ages for a progress too slow to be perceived within a few thousand years. We are then thrown back on the geological records for evidence.

This theory of development supposes, according to some, that nature spontaneously produces organic life. Others admit the creation of a single or a few primordial forms of monad life, which have gone on diverging and multiplying to the present time. As to the first theory, long and most thorough tests have settled it in the negative. One of the secretaries of the Academy of Sciences in France, the highest authority behind which we can take refuge, says: "There is, then, no

spontaneous generation. To doubt any longer is not to comprehend the question." Had a few life germs been created at the beginning, and gone on multiplying to the present time, we should look for a much greater diversity of animal life now than in the past, and all of a higher type; but neither of these conditions is found to obtain. In various places in Europe, contiguous to the Mediterranean, the Baltic and German Oceans, quarries have disclosed as great a variety of fossil fishes as those now living in the contiguous waters. Agassiz says: "I have examined the fossil fishes of the neighbourhood of Riga, on the Baltic, and they are *more numerous* than the present living species of the Baltic and German Oceans." All the living species are different from the fossil ones. The geological survey of the State of New York has disclosed *in each of the successive beds* within the area of the State, as numerous a variety of shells as the *sum total of all the species now living along the whole Atlantic coast of this continent*. What better evidence do we want that at all times the world has been inhabited by as great a diversity of animals as now exist, and, that at each period, they have been different from every other period. This is a very important fact, because it is a most powerful blow at that theory which would make us believe that all the animals have been derived from a few original beings, which have become diversified and varied in the course of time. Another most powerful blow at this baseless theory is the fact that animal life is found as low now as it ever has been. It is entirely inexplicable on this theory how the forces of nature, operating so powerfully and uniformly in all ages, would select some of these original germs of life and carry them on to so high a point, but be entirely powerless in regard to others; or, are we to suppose nature's laws so partial that they favored some and neglected others of her offspring?

To exclude the idea of a Divine personal intelligence, this scheme, called the development theory, has been propounded,

claiming that there is a gradual rise in the animal world, from the lowest in the early ages to the highest in the present. There is not only this gradation on the whole as to animal life, rising from the earliest to the present, but there is a triple coincidence in the succession, gradation, and growth of animals. Animal life, viewed as extending over the whole period of the life of our globe, certainly shows a gradation from the first to the last created. This same gradation exists at the present time, and the difference is as great between the lowest and the highest forms of life, now peopling the globe, as between the first and last created. Again, this same idea of gradation and growth is presented to us in the highest forms of life, for as all animal life has its origin in an egg, on about the same plane, man and the higher animals pass through as many and as great gradations from the germ until fully grown, as all the gradations of animal life now existing, or that have ever existed. A sparrow's egg has sparrow-life impressed upon it: it is hatched and grows into a sparrow, with sparrow instincts and nothing else; and so of all the hundreds of thousands forms of life, each and every one has his particular line of development, and never fails to go straight to and through its destined course.

NO TRANSITION FROM ONE CLASS OR ORDER TO ANOTHER.

As there are four entirely distinct plans on which all animal organisms have been built, no uniform consecutive series can be formed. As they are all cotemporaries they cannot be derived one from the other, though, on the whole, as classes, they undoubtedly rise one above the other. The Radiates being the lowest, still some Radiates rank higher than the lowest Molluscan tribes. Some Mollusks rise above the lowest Articulates. Some Articulates rise above the lowest Vertebrates. If the effort is made to pass from one class to the other, no point of contiguity can be found to make the transition

without doing more violence to their internal organic structure than would be required to transform the swine to a sheep, or a fowl to a dog in a few generations. There is not the slightest evidence in all the geological records of any such intermediate or transitional species.

Vertebrates again divide themselves into four orders, the fish, the reptile, the bird, and the mammal. As orders, they stand one above the other, in the order mentioned. But the higher species of fish are above the lowest reptile, the highest reptiles above the lowest birds, and the highest birds above the lowest mammals. If the transition is awkward from the highest articulate to the lowest vertebrate—for instance so as to make the butterfly the father of a lamper-eel—it will be equally awkward to establish a regular genetic connexion between the different orders of the vertebrates. The transition from the fish to the reptile would not seem so great, but if we attempt to make the transition from the highest reptile to the lowest bird we immediately perceive the violence done to nature. If we take the tortoise, the highest reptile, and suppose it the parent of the penguin, or any other low aquatic bird, we feel how awkward it is. Or, if we take the highest bird—the parrot, for instance—and make it the parent of the lowest mammal, which is the whale and its kindred species, we find a gulf as great as that which separates between the rich man and Lazarus. The whale is not a fish, for it has a double circulation, warm blood, and brings forth its young alive and suckles them. Extinct forms do nothing towards bridging over this gulf; it is absolutely impassable except by Divine power. Under any scheme of development of species from species, the system of life after ages of progress, would have become a blended mass,—the temple of nature fused over its surface, and throughout its structure. The study of the past has opened to view no such result.

To reason it appears necessary that a plan should have been pursued in order to exhibit the unity of author, purpose, and

end, in creation. Accordingly we find this unity in far reaching prophetic types, typical forms and special ends. The first humble vertebrate was a sure foreshadowing of man, as well as all the intermediate forms of animal life. More than ninety per cent. of all the organs found in man are identical in the lowest fish. It is not the unity of scientific nomenclature that has given the same name to different structures for convenience sake, but it is the unity in nature that has rendered necessary the unity of scientific nomenclature. The arm of a man, the fore-leg of a bear or dog, the wing of a bird, the paddle of a whale, and the fin of a fish, are all formed on the same plan, varied to suit the conditions of each. There was seemingly no necessity for this rigid adherence to a plan once adopted, only to show the working of mind—a divine intelligence in creation.

However long the ages that intervened between the first and last acts of creation, or between the different periods, the work was resumed as though not yet complete; thus anticipating by untold ages the cavils of unbelievers in their vain efforts to exclude him from his own creation, and relieve themselves from a sense of moral accountability by their erroneous and perverse reading of his handiwork, so that they are without excuse. God might have commenced his work at the other extreme, and progressed downwards, finishing with the lowest forces. Had he done this a pall dark as eternal night would have rested on his works, defying all comprehension. When the edifice was complete, no other progress being possible within the plan adopted, he proclaims his work finished, and he places man on the very apex of this vast pyramid of life. Now, giving him the two factors of form and color, as an alphabet of two letters, he has produced the myriad forms of human beings, so that no one shall be undistinguishable from every other one.

CHAIN OF CAUSE AND EFFECT.

We are told of the uniform all-controlling laws that govern our world through all ages, operating in the same manner, but still developing higher and higher forms of life : that this great adamantine chain binds all nature into one harmonious whole. But we have never been told how many links it has. We are required to receive it as a fact on the mere assumption of those who claim it in aid of their theories. We ask them to explain how it is that this great chain of cause and effect took some only of the first forms of life and carried them up to a certain point ; but when nearly or quite all life became extinct, at the close of the first period, again peopled the earth with entirely new orders, genera, and species, but still rigidly adhered to the four grand classes, and so on, many times over. If nature has had the power to change all the orders, genera, and species, for so many times, by what freak of nature shall we account for the permanence of the types or classes : why were not these changed as well as the others ?

The physical causes are the same now as they were before. Chemical agencies, physical agencies, act now as they have acted from the beginning. We have the evidence of this in the identical character of the rocks of the older and more recent formations, we have the evidence of it in the chemical identity of the materials of which the celestial bodies are formed. The physical world remains the same ; the laws which govern it remain the same, and from the beginning until now, have acted in the same way. Are, then, the different animals which have existed at different times, and which differ in the most varied manner, the result of causes that do not vary which ever act in the same manner ? This is contrary to all argument, contrary to any evidence we have. We cannot ascribe diversified results to uniform causes. Chemists know perfectly well what electricity, what light, what magnetism can produce. They know perfectly well that these vari-

ous combinations, and these various causes are different from the causes whose effects we witness in the animal kingdom. Uniformity of operation should have carried upward all organic beings; but some are as low now as the lowest in the genesis of creation: and where such myriads of species have been swept away and replaced by higher forms, we find a few genera—not species—existing through all time. The little shell *lingula* appeared on the scene in the early dawn of time, and it still exists, and what is peculiar, has a shell of phosphate, not carbonate of lime—of bone, not of stone, like all other shells. When uniform laws carried onward and upward nearly all other forms, how came this little shell to resist through such unmeasured ages, the powers of all-controlling laws.

Again, it is claimed that the constantly-improved conditions of the globe, by the force of natural law, enlarged the instincts and endowments of all its tribes of animals. The Christian theory is that God first prepared the field, and then created animals to occupy the new-made conditions. Instead of the instincts and endowments, pointing in the direction of the proper sphere of action assigned every living creature, this theory claims that the outward conditions, or objective world, with its laws, first existed, and that these brought up the animal instincts and endowments to their own level.

Let us see if they will accept the logical sequences of these positions. The instincts, endowments, aspirations, longings, hopes, and fears, are the product of nature's laws already existing, and acting for a sufficient length of time to bring all plastic forms into conformity with these laws, though they have never told us by what law these laws change themselves, so as to be ever evolving higher and still higher forms of life.

The vast majority vote of our race has been in favour of the existence of the supernatural, and of a world of living beings beyond this life: some in happiness, infinite and eternal, and others in woe everlasting. This theory denies the existence of any thing, even in man himself, except what has

been derived from the things, laws, and forces of the world around him. They are then required to find some alembic in nature, in which to distill such things or states, as sin, guilt, shame, remorse; to distill man in his totality. They must also find just cause for these states of being, and fearful forebodings. They must also find another alembic in which to distill repentance and faith, the raptures of pardon, and the witness of the Spirit, a holy life, a triumphant death, and a well-grounded hope of bliss everlasting. It will not avail to charge these things or states to superstition; for with them nothing can exist except in accordance and on a plan with the pre-existing laws of cause and effect. As no effect can rise higher than its cause, they are compelled to admit that the highest human intelligence and all the moral powers pre-existed in nature and her forces and laws. Neither can we be certain that these forces have as yet brought us up to a level with themselves. It is unphilosophical to assume that we have now reached the limit beyond which nature's laws cannot elevate us or other beings she may produce from her vast laboratory. Why should creation or development end just at this point, after progressing with such sure and certain strides through all the unmeasured ages of the past?

If this be so, all nature is but a living creature, not only full of eyes and a wheel within a wheel, but full of intelligence and instinct, with life; in a word, something equal to the Christian idea of God must be found to account for the wonders of creation. They want less than this to relieve themselves from the idea of accountability. If nature be such a power that it may do all the Scriptures tell us God will do, then where is the difference? God has threatened retribution, and nature acts retributively on all transgressors; and who can tell how far and how long she may act retributively?

Had a being of high intelligence, but without experience in the wonders of creation, been present at that period re-

vealed in the geological records, when nought existed but inorganic matter, with its wondrous laws: what more natural than to infer nature could do no more! But if assured that this same barren earth, without form and void, would soon put on a dress of vegetable beauty and glory, all waving in the breeze, laden with fruit, and fragrant with flowers,—what more natural than to doubt the possibility of inorganic chemistry performing such wonders? These wonders, however, have all been accomplished. If, at this point, again, he had been told that land, water, and air would be filled with all forms of a higher life than the vegetable, he might still have doubted. If told, again, that the lord of this lower world would come and rule over all; He whose coming had been foretold by a thousand mute prophecies, as necessary to the fulfilment of the perfect plan; that in his organism so linked with the orders below him as to be one with them in many things; while, in the other part of his wondrous endowments, he should be more akin to heaven than earth—more akin to his God than to the beasts that perish; how might the faith of such an one be taxed by such a revelation? And yet this has been the course and progress of creation up to this time. Now, we are told, not by nature, but by revelation, that this being, so high and so wonderfully endowed, is destined, if obedient to his God, to live in a sphere where endless progression in all that is good and glorious will be the law of his being. What more is there to stagger our faith at this point in creation, than there would have been at any previous period? Rather, having seen so much, have we not far stronger reasons to expect much more, especially as no final end worthy the unbounded display of all powerful and all-wise resources has yet been attained?

Why must creation stop short at this point, like some vast and most elaborately wrought monumental column, broken short in the middle, left uncrowned with a statue, to become an inexplicable mystery to all beholders?

It is unphilosophical to claim that after progressing ever onward and upward for such unmeasured ages, we have now reached the limits of all progress, and can from our present stand point look out on empty nothingness, where all is void and blank; that, at last we have seen one of the boundary lines that confines nature's empire. The assumption is, that we have explored all space, all worlds, all laws, forces, and powers; and being possessed of all knowledge and wisdom, we have found that at this point nature must rest for ever, having exhausted all her powers in the production of the past and present wonders of our globe. Where is the warrant for such an assumption? and where the final end worthy the means employed? Should all end here, will it not resemble

" Ocean into tempest tossed,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly?"

Another mystery appears. Our unbelievers claim that now the Almighty or nature does nothing but keep agoing the everlasting trundle of the vast machine. If so, how comes it that such infinitely varied results are the product of uniform laws? Nature has never repeated herself any more than human events and human history. If this is all the product of unvarying laws, the wonders of nature are a thousand fold more wonderful than all we find in revelation.

But where is the evidence of a vast adamant chain of cause and effect, embracing all things, beings, and powers? We know that inorganic chemistry works wonders in the laboratory of nature; but we ask for the evidence that all things are bound up in this great chain. If inorganic chemistry has produced the higher forces of organic chemistry, it has evolved a power greater than itself: for organic chemistry dominates with ease over the inorganic; dissolves, dissipates, and overcomes all its laws, and builds up the materials into an entirely new form, and far more glorious than it was before.

Again, there is such a power as vital chemistry, which dominates at will over both inorganic and organic chemistry, and treats them as subject provinces. Here are, at least, three separate pieces of the supposed great chain, each higher subordinating the lower ones. That cannot be an indissoluble adamantine chain, binding all in inexorable laws, even God himself, if a simple plant can dissolve and eat up a part of it so easily as we see every day. This is by no means all the absurdity involved in this assumption, for there have appeared on the stage two ranges of powers entirely above and outside of all we have mentioned. Man's intellectual and moral powers find a most appropriate field of action in the domain of nature proper. But intellectual and moral powers do not belong to the domain of nature. They are not chemically compounded, nor have they form or extension. These powers, not things, have nothing in common with any of the separate and independent pieces of the great chain of cause and effect.

How can an endless chain be made up of such incongruous materials as metals, gases, animal functions and instincts, perception, will, reason, memory, and the like, with moral qualities good and bad, and at irreconcilable and eternal war with each other?

This would be a wonderful chain, indeed! As well undertake to make a ladder to the moon of carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, electricity, aurora borealis, sunlight, and moon beams. As well call them all substances, and attempt to measure them in a quart pot or with a yard measure; as well attempt to weigh the virtues of justice, mercy, and love of God with the crimes of fraud, arson, drunkenness, and murder, on the same scale, with a bale of merchandise.

We are told there is no such thing as a miracle, as it would be a suspension or violation of the laws of nature; it is unhistorical to admit the possibility of a miracle. We admit

that most of the miracles recorded in Scripture were wrought to restore nature to her normal state. Others were wrought to vindicate the moral government of God; and what more reasonable than this, if the whole of nature is but a field for the action of moral beings and powers?

Let us, however, inquire if sin does not suspend and violate the laws of nature? A man drinks alcohol—a thing nature never compounded. He disorders his system, brings on disease, abuses his wife nature taught him to love, beggars his children, and instead of teaching them knowledge and virtue, he perverts their morals, teaches them all crimes, violates all the laws of nature, brings himself to a premature grave, sends his children forth perverted and in a state of unnature to perform an endless repetition of the bad miracles he originated. Nature never made gunpowder, a revolver, a dagger, or pulled a trigger. With these the sinner suspends and overcomes the laws of nature and the vital chemistry in his fellows, and sends them to premature graves. Nature's laws never made speech or conversed with bullets on the battle field. While they are so fearful of admitting a miracle that implies a violation or suspension of nature's laws, they themselves are performing miracles every day according to their own definition of a miracle. When the Christian humbly expresses his faith in miracles wrought on the other side in vindication of the moral government of God, and to restore the evil sin has wrought, they tell us, "Hands off, if you please; no interfering with the laws of nature."

These things may be called misdirections or diseases. Be it so, then; put it down as agreed, that sin is misdirection; and that, so far as there is a real something in it. Then comes the question: Who is it, what is it, that misdirects? Is the misdirection of God? That will not be said. Will it then be said that piracy, war, and the slave trade are the misdirections only of disease, as when the hand of a lunatic takes the life of a friend? Theodore Parker says: "Dis-

cordant causes have produced effects not harmonious." Is the boasted system, then, of nature a discordant, blundering, misdirecting system? If so, it should not be wholly incredible that nature may sometimes blunder into a miracle.

The universal consciousness of man is that there is blame, wrong, sin—not simply misdirection or disease. Men delight in cauterizing and satirizing certain blameable actions. Who ever thought of satirizing a storm at sea, or a thunder storm, or a ship on fire at sea, or a man with the consumption, or one in the agonies of death? If sin were only misdirection or a disease, why not satirize other things as well as it?

No age or nation has produced men without an innate consciousness, or sense of right and wrong. All social and civil laws, customs, and states, have been founded upon and controlled by this universal consciousness. If this is the product of nature, it is a part and parcel of her economy and our interest, the same as food and clothing, sight and hearing; so that resolving all into the product of nature's laws will not relieve us from the duties enjoined, or deliver us from the retribution threatened.

PROVIDENCE FAVORS ONLY A SUPERNATURAL RELIGION.

Believers in revelation are reproached for their easy credulity in admitting a revelation with all its wonders and miracles. We may well retort on them for the *soft* credulity that can admit ten-fold greater marvels, which at the same time involves them in such contradictions and absurdities, that to escape one dilemma they leap into a greater.

Believers in revelation account for the wonders of creation and providence by ascribing all to an infinitely wise and glorious God, and so are perfectly consistent. Unbelievers have to account for the same things without any adequate cause.

Many systems of religion have been devised for our world, supposed by their authors to be in accordance with man's na-

ture and interest. Confucius, Zoroaster, Menu, Mahomed, and others, have devised systems of religious and civil polity for man, but nature has repudiated them all, though they claimed to be her offspring, and has lent all her vast resources as an humble handmaid, in aid of a system that claims to be all supernatural and divine. "We turn ourselves to the courses and grand events of human history, all that we include in the providential history of our world—the wars, diplomacies, immigrations, revolutions, persecutions, discoveries and scientific developments of the world, and we are immediately met by the appearance of some wonderful consent or understanding between Christianity and the providential courses of things. Christianity is, in form, the supernatural kingdom and working of God in the earth. It begins with a supernatural advent of divinity, and closes with a supernatural exit of divinity; and the divine visitant thus entered into the world, and going out from it, is himself a divine miracle in his own person; his works are miracles, and his doctrines are miracles, and the whole transactions taken as a movement on the world, or in it, that is not of it, supposes, in fact, a new and superior kind of administration, instituted by God Himself. Accordingly, if it be true that God is in such a work, having all the highest and last ends of existence rested in it, he ought to govern the world as we have already said for it, and so as to forward this as the main interest included in it." "Why now is it that time, and the world's government, conspire so powerfully with Jesus, and not with such a great and deeply cultured soul as Plato? Why with Christianity, and not with any proudest school of human opinion? All the mere, human teachers are much closer to nature, certainly, than Jesus was; and if the world's government is wholly natural or in the interest of nature, it would seem to be a very plain inference that what belongs to nature will be most easily perpetuated. Why should a government in the interest of nature concur to enthrone and crown what is really supernatural?

If there is no power above nature, whatever pretends to be supernatural ought to die soonest, and show greatest frailty. When, therefore, we consider that Christianity goes directly into a conflict with nature, calling nature death, and engaging to combat the death by its regenerative power, and that still after so many centuries, it holds on victorious, what shall we infer than that the government of the world is with it, in its interests engaged to give it success? These events are a kind of providential procession, that we see marching on to the accomplishment of the one given result: the universal and final ascendancy of Jesus Christ. They march, too, in the beat of time, preserving their right order, and appearing each just when it is wanted, not before or after. When has it ever been seen that the government of the world was conspiring in this large historic way, across the distance of remote ages, with any merely natural man, his teachings, or plans, or works? Whatever else may be true, this at least is plain, that between Christianity as a fabric all supernatural, concerned for nothing but to do supernatural work, and the world as mere nature, suffering nothing above nature to be, there ought to be, and indeed never could be any such concurrence."

THE FINAL END.

As plainly appears, the affairs of our world are administered in the interest of Christianity. The work then to be accomplished by this divine institution must be the final end and consummation of the grand scheme. This end embraces the moral discipline of the race. Prayer is to be made to God the Father, through Christ, for grace and strength to serve him with reverence and godly fear. We have seen how the phantom of a great adamant chain of cause and effect has dissolved at the touch of reason. Prayer, instead of being only a good dumb-bell exercise, as has been represented, is one of the higher laws of our being. If a man can rescue his fellow in answer to prayer, how much more can God do it?

If a man can answer the request of a fellow for food and clothing, instruction and assistance, how much more can He do it, and this without any violation of law more than in our case ?

We have faintly depicted some of the glorious handy-works of Him who worketh all things after the council of His own will. We have obtained a few faint glimpses of His infinite resources in unfolding His glory. Far back in the twilight of time he lays the corner-stone of the universe when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Slowly, age after age, he builds up the mighty fabric : a thousand years being to Him as one day. If we conceive the inorganic world as the foundation on which the building is to be reared, how grand will be the proportions, and how rich the materials of that edifice ! Gems and gold are all at hand to erect a structure that shall bespeak the glory of God. We search in vain in the inorganic world for a final end worthy of God, and His finished work. We may again explore all the wonders of the vegetable kingdom ; still all have written on them in most legible characters, that they are but means to an end still beyond. Vital forms fill the earth, and at last man appears, lord of all in this lower world ; still we find no final end answering to the means employed. If this is all, the high expectations raised by a study of the wonderful march of the grandest events conceivable by man, must be doomed to grievous disappointment. All the means and agencies employed in the long and infinitely varied process have produced ends corresponding in importance to the means and processes employed. In every separate department of creation we find a thousand conspiring causes all intelligently uniting to produce a given result. From the remotest departments of creation come materials and forces of all descriptions, each with its quota of contributions to unite in the production of a given end. These thousand minor ends are again taken, and by combining and utilizing their materials

and forces, a higher end is gained ; but as yet no end has been reached that is not manifestly a means to a higher end still beyond. What then must be the grandeur and glory of that final end where all those agencies shall at last meet, and show all the infinitely wise and mighty processes to have been but adequate to its production ? We have the fullest assurance that there is some final aim where all these agencies will converge, and exhaust their mighty forces in the production of some result befitting them all, and the God that ordained them.

Beyond the cultivation of man's moral and spiritual powers we cannot go ; this is the last ascent to which we can rise in our present state. We have seen the provinces of nature rising one above the other, and each superior dominating over the inferior, until, having passed beyond the domain of things, we enter the confines of powers, or the supernatural. Our first step in the domain of powers has revealed to us the intellectual world. Passing onward another step, we enter the department of the moral powers. If we ask ourselves the question, which is superior, the intellectual or the moral powers ? a moment's reflection will show that the intellectual never subordinate and make use of the moral powers to accomplish purely intellectual purposes, but that the moral powers subordinate the intellectual, and through them all the things and forces in nature to accomplish moral purposes. It is, then, in the domain of the moral and spiritual that all the past must converge as in a final end.

The Christian alone, redeemed by grace and brought into union and communion with his God, and who is by faith looking for a city of habitation, who is looking for a new heavens and new earth, a resurrection morn, and the New Jerusalem, with his God reigning among his ancients gloriously, conceives a final end befitting the scenes of creation, providence, and redemption—befitting himself and his God.

